

# **AGENCY CONDITIONS AND COMMENTS**



DONALD L. WOLFE, Director

# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

*"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"*

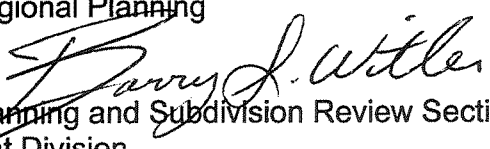
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ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:  
P.O. BOX 1460  
ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91802-1460

September 1, 2005

IN REPLY PLEASE  
REFER TO FILE: **LD-4**

TO: Russell Fricano  
Zoning Permits Section I  
Department of Regional Planning

FROM: Barry S. Witler   
Transportation Planning and Subdivision Review Section  
Land Development Division

### CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 98-062

We have further reviewed the subject Permit in the unincorporated area east of Agoura Hills in the vicinity of Palo Comado Canyon Road, Chesebro Road, and the Ventura Freeway. This Permit is for the construction of a new primary school with appurtenant facilities. The following recommended conditions supersede our previous recommended conditions dated June 2, 2005.

If this Permit is approved, we recommend the following conditions:

1. Dedicate right of way 30 feet from centerline on each side of Canwood Street including sufficient right of way for a standard cul-de-sac (a turning radius of 32 feet) at the east end of Canwood Street to the satisfaction of Public Works.
2. Construct curb, gutter, pavement, and sidewalk on Canwood Street to the satisfaction of Public Works.
3. The applicant should contact the City of Agoura Hills for required improvements on the portion of Canwood Street within the City's jurisdiction.
4. Prior to the issuance of any building permit, the school pickup and drop-off circulation plan shall be prepared and submitted to the satisfaction of Public Works.

Russell Fricano  
September 1, 2005  
Page 2

5. Comply with the traffic mitigation measures identified in the attached August 31, 2005, letter from William J. Winter of our Traffic and Lighting Division to Daryl Koutnik of the Department of Regional Planning and the August 31, 2005, letter from Rossana D'Antonio of Public Works to Kim Szalay of the Department of Regional Planning to the satisfaction of Public Works. If you have any questions on this item, please contact Lani Alfonso of our Traffic and Lighting Division at (626) 300-4748.

If you have any questions regarding Comment No. 4, please contact Sam Richards at (626) 300-4842.

WH:ca  
P:\LD\PUB\TRANS\CUPS\CUP 98-062 CONSTRUCTION OF PRIMARY SCHOOL

Attach.

cc: Traffic and Lighting (Chon)



DONALD L. WOLFE, Director

# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

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August 31, 2005

IN REPLY PLEASE  
REFER TO FILE: LD-0

TO: Kim Szalay  
Department of Regional Planning

FROM: Rossana D'Antonio *RD*  
Department of Public Works

**PROJECT NO. 98-062, CUP NO. 98-062  
HESCHEL SCHOOL WEST PROJECT  
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS  
RESPONSES TO AGOURA HILLS PUBLIC WORKS CONDITIONS**

### General

1. *All improvement plans, including, but not limited to, street, drainage, signal, and striping/signage plans, for the entire project must be submitted as one package. This package must also include all supporting studies. All improvement plan sheets shall be 24" x 36" and must have the City's standard signature blocks and be legibly drawn to ensure proper reproduction and adequate record keeping. All lettering on plans shall be a minimum of 80 CL (.08 inch) in size to ensure proper reproduction and microfilming. All original plans shall be drawn in ink. All plans shall be prepared and signed by a California State Registered Civil Engineer.*
2. *For construction within public right-of-way, an encroachment permit is required in accordance with Agoura Hills Municipal Code. All required applicable fees, securities, and insurance must be posted prior to issuance of the encroachment permit.*
3. *The applicant shall obtain and pay all costs of acquiring any off-site real property and easements required in connection with this project prior to issuance of a grading permit.*
4. *The applicant shall enter into a construction agreement with the City, and shall post the necessary improvement securities for all construction work within the public right-of-way, public/utility easements, and for all on-site grading.*

5. *All Record Drawings ("As-Built" drawings) and supporting documentation shall be submitted to the Department of Public Works prior to scheduling the project's final inspection.*
6. *All block walls and retaining walls shall be limited to six feet in height.*

Response: We concur with Items 1 –6 only where it pertains to work within City jurisdiction. Otherwise, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works requirements will be enforced.

#### Grading

7. *All grading shall conform to City's Grading Ordinance, Chapter 33 of the Uniform Building Code as modified.*
8. *A site paving/drainage/grading plan shall be submitted for review and acceptance by the City Engineer. The plans, among other details, shall show existing and proposed contours, proposed utilities, existing and proposed easements, storm water facilities and facilities for the handicapped. The grading plan shall be accompanied by a Soils Report prepared in accordance with the Agoura Hills Guidelines for geotechnical/geological reports. Prior to the issuance of a grading permit the following must be satisfied; the grading plan has been reviewed and accepted by the City Engineer, the applicable plan check, inspection and permit fees have been paid and the grading security has been posted.*
9. *For any grading operations during the period November 1 and April 1, of each year, the applicant shall submit a wet weather erosion control plan for review and acceptance by the City Engineer.*
10. *All off-site work shall require written permission from the affected property owner prior to beginning said work.*
11. *The applicant shall submit to the City Engineer for review and approval the haul route for fill/excavation material.*

Response: We concur with Items 7 –11 only where it pertains to work within City jurisdiction. Otherwise, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works requirements will be enforced.

Drainage

12. *A drainage study shall be prepared by a California State Registered Civil Engineer for the review and acceptance by the City Engineer. Hydraulic design shall conform to the current Hydraulic Design Manual of Los Angeles County. Flows shall remain in their historical drainage pattern so as not to impact neighboring properties.*
13. *Drainage improvements on private property shall be continually maintained, repaired, and replaced by the property owner. The applicant shall obtain appropriate permits from regulating agencies prior to drainage improvements within any streambed.*
14. *All storm drain improvements within the City limits shall be reviewed and approved by the City Engineer and Los Angeles County Public Works. ~~Prior to acceptance of the improvements, the applicant shall transfer all storm drain maintenance responsibilities over to the Los Angeles County Public Works Department.~~*

Response: Los Angeles County Department of Public Works does not transfer drains prior to acceptance. Normal procedures consist of constructing a Miscellaneous Transfer Drain within City limits to the specifications of Los Angeles County Department of Public Works prior to acceptance and transfer to the Los Angeles County Flood Control District.

15. *Prior to the issuance of a grading permit, the applicant shall submit a Standard Urban Storm Water Mitigation Plan (SUSWMP) that shall be subject to approval by the City Engineer. The applicant shall incorporate the Standard Urban Storm Water Mitigation Plan for commercial projects as outlined in the Model Program for Stormwater Management Within the County of Los Angeles. This will require detention and treatment of the first 0.75 inches of surface runoff during a rainstorm.*
16. *The SUSWMP shall identify pollutant sources, and shall include design and recommend construction and implementation of stormwater pollution prevention measures in order to reduce pollutants and erosion in storm water discharges from the construction site during the construction period and after construction as required.*

Response: We concur with Items 12 – 16 only where it pertains to work within City jurisdiction. Otherwise, County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works requirements will be enforced.

Streets/Traffic

17. *Prior to issuance of any building permit, the applicant shall pay the full amount of the Arterial Street System Development Fee (TIF) specified in the City of Agoura Hills Municipal Code. The estimated fee of \$1,239,520 is based on 508 pm peak trips at a rate of \$2,440 per trip. Actual fees will be determined at the time of building permit issuance. The applicant is eligible to receive reimbursement of the TIF payment for all improvements that are on Palo Comado Canyon Road and at the interchange. The applicant shall submit all invoices paid demonstrating actual costs incurred to construct the improvements. The City Engineer shall review and approve all eligible reimbursement costs.*

Response: The applicant shall negotiate the amount of their contribution to the City's TIF and pay that amount to the City of Agoura Hills.

18. *The applicant shall design and construct the westerly one-half (32 feet) of Palo Comado Canyon Road improvements from the intersection of Chesebro Road/Driver Avenue to the existing improvements that abut the existing service station. The design shall be completed and accepted by the City of Agoura Hills prior to issuance of a grading permit. The construction improvements shall be completed and accepted prior to occupancy of any structure on the project site.*

Response: County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works concurs, and therefore, has no comment.

19. *Prior to issuance of a grading permit, the applicant shall design street improvements at the Canwood Street/Chesebro Road/Driver Avenue/Palo Comado Canyon Road intersection. The street improvements shall include the construction of an eastbound and westbound exclusive left turn lane in addition to a shared through/right turn lane on Driver Avenue and Palo Comado Canyon Road. These improvements may require the road widening on the north side of Driver Avenue west of Chesebro Road. Said design shall be reviewed and approved by the City of Agoura Hills. Prior to occupancy of any structure on the project site, the applicant shall fully construct and have accepted by the City of Agoura Hills, said street improvements at Canwood Street/Chesebro Road/Driver Avenue/Palo Comado Canyon Road intersection.*

Response: The westbound left-turn lane has already been installed.

20. *Prior to issuance of a grading permit, the applicant shall design a roundabout at the intersection of the U.S. 101 northbound freeway ramp and Palo Comado Canyon Road/ Canwood Street. Said roundabout design shall be reviewed and approved by Caltrans and the City of Agoura Hills prior to issuance of said grading permit for the project. The applicant shall be solely responsible for acquiring any off-site right-of-way as necessary to construct the full improvements for the roundabout. The applicant shall dedicate to the appropriate agency (Caltrans or City of Agoura Hills) the right-of-way for roundabout. Prior to occupancy of any structure on the project site, the applicant shall fully construct and have accepted by Caltrans and the City of Agoura Hills the roundabout street improvements.*

Response: County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works concurs, and therefore, has no comment.

- ~~21. In lieu of the three previous conditions (Conditions no. 18, 19, and 20) and prior to issuance of a grading permit for the site, the applicant shall:~~

- ~~• Design a new intersection (mid-block) on Palo Comado Road approximately 200 feet east of Chesebro Road...~~
- ~~• Design full width street improvements for Palo Comado Canyon Road from the existing intersection of Driver Avenue/Chesebro Road to the US 101 Freeway offramp...~~
- ~~• Design a traffic signal for both the new mid-block intersection and for the intersection of US101 westbound freeway ramp/Palo Comado Canyon Drive...~~

Response: This condition is not applicable and should be removed. The applicant has indicated that the project will propose taking access off of Canwood Street with the installation of a roundabout at the intersection of Canwood Street, Palo Comado Canyon Road, and the US-101 West bound freeway ramps.

22. *The applicant shall design and construct a new signal at Chesebro Road and US 101 eastbound ramps at Dorothy Drive. The design shall be reviewed and approved by Caltrans and the City of Agoura Hills prior to issuance of a grading permit. The applicant shall fully construct the signal prior to occupancy of any Phase II structures on the project site.*



Response: We amend this condition to note that the applicant shall install the traffic signal prior to occupancy of Phase II structures on the project site.

23. *The applicant shall pay to the City of Agoura Hills a pro-rata fair share of a traffic signal for both the impacted intersections of Laura La Plante Drive/Agoura Road and also Chesebro Road/Palo Comado Canyon Road (south of the US101 freeway). Said pro-rata fee shall be based upon 25% of the cost of a signal as calculated by the City of Agoura Hills.*

Response: County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works concurs, and therefore, has no comment.

24. *All walls adjacent to public right-of-way shall be located entirely on private property.*

Response: County of Los Angeles Department of Public Works concurs, and therefore, has no comment.

#### Utilities

25. *The applicant shall underground all existing overhead utilities within the public right-of-way for those street areas that are reconstructed by this project. This shall include any utilities along the westerly half of Palo Comado and also any portion of the realigned Canwood Street south of Driver Avenue.*

Response: NA

26. *The applicant shall relocate those underground facilities such as water and sewer to coordinate and align with the construction of new street improvements to be constructed by the project. This shall include any utilities along the westerly half of Palo Comado and also any portion of the realigned Canwood Street south of Driver Avenue.*

Response: NA

RGD:jmw

P:\LDPUB\ADMIN\ROSSANA\PROJECT 98-062 CUP 98-062 HESCHEL SCHOOL WEST



DONALD L. WOLFE, Director

# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

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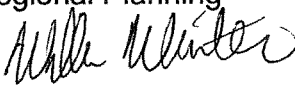
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ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91802-1460

August 31, 2005

IN REPLY PLEASE  
REFER TO FILE: T-4

TO: Daryl Koutnik  
Department of Regional Planning

FROM: William J. Winter   
Traffic and Lighting Division

**HESCHEL SCHOOL  
CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT 98062  
TRAFFIC IMPACT MITIGATION AND TRANSPORTATION DEMAND MANAGEMENT  
AGOURA HILLS AREA**

This memo supercedes our previous letters dated April 6, 2005, and May 19, 2005, to Crain and Associates regarding the subject project. In addition, the following traffic impact mitigation measures shall supplement the street/traffic conditions recommended by the City of Agoura Hills as they were revised in our department's memo dated August 31, 2005. These referenced documents are attached herein.

For the cumulative traffic impact at the following intersection, the project shall pay its pro-rata share to the City of Agoura Hills towards the following:

Canwood Street and Chesebro Road at Driver Avenue and Palo Comado Canyon

This intersection currently meets the County's warrant for traffic signal installation. However, if a traffic signal is not acceptable to the City of Agoura Hills as traffic impact mitigation, the proposed lane configuration change may be substituted as alternative mitigation:

West approach: An exclusive left-turn lane, one through, and one shared through/right-turn lane instead of one shared left-turn/through/right-turn lane.

Mr. Daryl Koutnik  
August 31, 2005  
Page 2

The attached Transportation Demand Management Plan shall also be included as a condition of the project.

If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Lani Alfonso of our Traffic Studies Section, Traffic and Lighting Division, at (626) 300-4748.

LA:pc  
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Attach.

DPW Guidelines Revised 8/31/05

**Heschel School Carpooling and Monitoring Plan:**

The Heschel School shall develop and administer a carpool program, with the intent of reducing peak period traffic volumes to and from the school. Although no trip reduction programs are necessary to mitigate the school's traffic impacts, the applicant has indicated that they consent to implementing a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) carpooling program with a minimum of 25 percent student participation. This will effectively reduce the number of school vehicle trips by 25 percent.

The TDM program is intended to consist of the following elements:

- The County (or a designated traffic consultant) shall conduct traffic counts and evaluate whether the school is in compliance with the specified 25 percent vehicle trip reduction.
- An annual school calendar must be submitted to the County indicating holidays and special events. The County shall select the count days without notice to the School.
- The traffic counts shall be compared to a baseline number of vehicle trips generated by the school. The baseline shall be 75 percent of the school's a.m. peak hour project vehicle trips as derived for the school in the project traffic study dated February 2005. The current student enrollment at the beginning of the school year will be used to calculate the school's a.m. peak hour project vehicle trips.
- The County (or a designated traffic consultant) shall conduct three traffic counts during each school year.
- The traffic counts and monitoring will continue until two years after full build out of the school and complete occupancy of the final phase.
- A copy of all traffic counts and monitoring reports shall be sent to the school and the City of Agoura Hills. If the reported traffic count exceeds the baseline traffic count, a second traffic count shall be conducted within 30 days to verify the conditions. If this subsequent traffic count also exceeds the baseline traffic count, the school shall have 30 days to submit a remediation plan to the Department of Regional Planning and the Department of Public Works for review and approval. Upon failure by the school to remediate, the Department of Regional Planning may impose such further remediation measures as are warranted by the situation, including, without limitation, fines, enrollment limitations, or other measures deemed appropriate.
- The County's cost of monitoring and reporting as well as the cost of the traffic counts are the sole responsibility of the applicant.

*Applicants Revised 7/30/05*

**Heschel School Carpooling and Monitoring Plan:**

The Heschel School voluntarily agrees to develop and administer a carpool program for the school, with the intent of reducing peak period traffic volumes to and from the School. This program will be voluntary, as other conditions imposed on the School with regard to requirements for physical traffic mitigation improvements (roadway widenings, traffic signal improvements/installation, restriping, etc.) will fully mitigate both the project-specific and incremental cumulative traffic impacts of the full enrollment (750 students) at the School. No trip reduction programs are necessary in order to mitigate the School's traffic impacts, and therefore, no specific Transportation Demand Management (TDM) or carpooling program is specifically required.

However, notwithstanding that traffic reductions by the School are not necessary, the permittee, its staff, faculty, students, and parents shall voluntarily enter into and comply with, the following TDM program, which shall consist of the following elements:

- A. Method. For purposes of these conditions, "School Year" shall mean September 1 through June 30. The County shall conduct automated (i.e., with tubes or wires) traffic counts in accordance with generally accepted traffic counting procedures at the campus entrance on three consecutive days during weeks void of national or school holidays or scheduled student trips. An annual school calendar must be submitted to the County indicating holidays and special events. The County shall select the count days. The reported count shall be the average of the three (3) day count. No advance notice of any count will be given to the permittee. For comparison to the a.m. Baseline (defined below), future counts shall be the average total vehicle trip count over three consecutive days (Tuesday through Thursday).
- B. Morning Counts. The County shall conduct automated morning traffic counts at the beginning of each new School semester (or quarter, as applicable) within two (2) weeks of the beginning of the semester on three consecutive days during weeks void of national or school holidays or scheduled student trips. The a.m. peak hour vehicle trip counts shall be conducted during the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m., with the "peak hour" traffic volume for each day identified as the one hour period (four consecutive 15-minute periods) within the count hours of 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. having the highest traffic volume. The official semester (or quarter, as applicable) traffic count used for comparison to the a.m. Baseline (defined below) shall be the average of the three daily a.m. peak hour maximum values.

The County shall communicate the results to the School within 10 days of completion of any count. If the reported morning count in a semester (or quarter) in any School Year exceeds the a.m. Baseline (defined below), a second count shall be conducted within one month to verify the conditions. If this subsequent count also exceeds the a.m. Baseline, the School shall have 30 days to submit a remediation plan to the Director of Planning for review and approval. Upon failure by the school to remediate, the Director of Planning may impose such further remediation measures as are warranted by the situation, including, without limitation, fines, enrollment limitations, or other measures deemed appropriate.

- C. Morning Peak Baseline. An average morning (a.m.) peak hour “inbound” trip limit, or “Baseline”, shall be specified based on the current student enrollment at the time of each monitoring count, using the School-specific trip generation rates identified and approved in the project traffic study (February 2005).
- D. Count Results. A copy of all traffic counts and monitoring reports shall be delivered by the County to the School and the City Council.
- E. Carpooling Plan. The School shall coordinate between students a carpooling plan, with a voluntary target effectiveness of at least 20 percent of the student enrollment at the time of each count participating in the program. While student participation in the carpool program is an objective, the purpose of the TDM/Carpool Program shall be to ensure that traffic resulting from the School does not exceed that calculated in the project traffic study. The School shall submit to the County for review a copy of the TDM/Carpool Program being planned for implementation which will also be monitored by the County.
- F. Cost. The reporting review fee and cost of counts are the sole responsibility of the School.



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ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:  
P.O. BOX 1460  
ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91802-1460

May 19, 2005

IN REPLY PLEASE  
REFER TO FILE: T-4

Mr. Ronald Hirsch  
Crain and Associates  
2007 Sawtelle Boulevard, Suite 4  
Los Angeles, CA 90025

Dear Mr. Hirsch:

**HESCHEL SCHOOL  
CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT 98062  
REQUEST FOR CORRECTION (APRIL 14, 2005)  
AGOURA HILLS AREA**

As requested, the following corrections shall be made to our letter dated April 6, 2005, regarding our review of the Heschel School Traffic Impact Study:

- Page 4, the cumulative mitigation measure for the west approach of the following intersection shall read as follows:

Canwood Street and Chesebro Road at Driver Avenue and Palo Comado Canyon

The intersection is forecasted to meet the warrants for traffic signal installation. Therefore, the project should contribute its "fair share" to the installation of a signal and the ultimate configuration as required by the City. However, if in addition to a signal installation an interim mitigation is preferred by the City, the following lane configuration shall be implemented:

West approach: An exclusive left-turn lane and a shared through/right-turn lane instead of a shared left-turn/through/right-turn lane.

If a traffic signal is not acceptable to the City of Agoura Hills as traffic impact mitigation, the following alternative lane configuration should be implemented to improve the intersection design capacity while maintaining the four-way stop control system:

MT.

Mr. Ronald Hirsch  
May 19, 2005  
Page 2

West approach: An exclusive left-turn lane, one through lane, and one shared through/right-turn lane instead of one shared left-turn/through/right-turn lane.

- Page 5, the cumulative mitigation measure for the west approach of the following intersection shall read as follows:

Chesebro Road and Laura La Plante Drive at Agoura Road

West approach: One left-turn only lane and one shared through/right-turn lane instead of one shared left-turn/through/right-turn lane.

All other mitigation measures shall remain as stated in our letter dated April 6, 2005.

If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Marian Tadrous of our Traffic and Lighting Division, Traffic Studies Section, at (626) 300-4848.

Very truly yours,

DONALD L. WOLFE  
Acting Director of Public Works



WILLIAM J. WINTER  
Assistant Deputy Director  
Traffic and Lighting Division

MT:cn

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cc: Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky (Vivian Rescalvo)  
Caltrans (Cheryl Powell)  
City of Agoura Hills (Ed Cline)  
Department of Regional Planning (Daryl Koutnik)

bc: Land Development (Chong, Witler)





# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

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IN REPLY PLEASE  
REFER TO FILE: T-4

April 6, 2005

Mr. Ronald Hirsch  
Crain and Associates  
2007 Sawtelle Boulevard, Suite 4  
Los Angeles, CA 90025

Dear Mr. Hirsch:

**HESCHEL SCHOOL  
CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT 98062  
ADMINISTRATIVE DRAFT TRAFFIC ANALYSIS (FEBRUARY 2005)  
AGOURA HILLS AREA**

As requested, we have reviewed the above-mentioned document. The proposed project is located just east of Palo Comado Canyon Road between Chesebro Road and the Ventura (US-101) Freeway in the unincorporated County of Los Angeles area of Agoura Hills.

The proposed project includes a 164,850-square-foot school with a maximum enrollment of 660 K-8 students and 90 preschool students. The school will be staffed with approximately 97 teachers and administrators. The project is estimated to generate approximately 2,640 vehicle trips daily, with 720 and 79 vehicle trips during the a.m. and p.m. peak hours, respectively. The project is also expected to generate approximately 508 vehicle trips during the afternoon p.m. school peak hour.

The permanent buildings for the school will be developed in a series of phases over the course of approximately 12 years, with student enrollment growing accordingly based on the capacity of the completed campus during each phase. Phase I will be completed between 2006 and 2007 and will be able to accommodate approximately 390 students. Phase II should be completed by Year 2008 and will have an enrollment of approximately 670 students. Phase III is projected to be completed by 2010 and will allow for the full enrollment of 750 students. Phase IV will complete the development with the replacement of all the remaining temporary units. All project-related improvements shall be made a condition of approval to be in place prior to issuance of any building permits for Phase II.

**FILE COPY**

We generally agree with the study that the traffic generated by the project alone will significantly impact the following City of Agoura Hills roadways and intersections. The following improvements shall be the sole responsibility of the project and shall be made a condition of approval to be in place prior to issuance of any building permits for Phase II.

Canwood Street and Chesebro Road at Driver Avenue and Palo Comado Canyon

This intersection currently meets the County's warrant for traffic signal installation. Therefore, the project should contribute its pro-rata share for the installation of a traffic signal and the ultimate configuration of this intersection as required by the City of Agoura Hills. However, if a traffic signal is not acceptable to the City of Agoura Hills as traffic impact mitigation, the following new lane configuration should be implemented to improve the intersection design capacity.

West approach: An exclusive left-turn lane and a shared through/right-turn lane instead of a shared left-turn/through/right-turn lane.

Palo Comado Canyon Road at US-101 Freeway Westbound Ramps

Either one of the following proposed improvements will provide appropriate traffic control for the intersection:

a) Roundabout

Reconstruct the intersection, including all approaches, to install a new traffic roundabout. The roundabout would control all approaches to this intersection, including the northbound and southbound Palo Comado Canyon Road approaches, the westbound US-101 on/off ramps, and the Canwood Street approach. The recommended roundabout shall be designed and constructed to the satisfaction of Caltrans and the City of Agoura Hills.

b) Traffic Signal

Reconfigure the intersection to include the Canwood Street approach as part of an overall intersection geometry and install a new traffic signal at this intersection. The new lane configuration for this intersection should be as follows:

East approach (US-101 Freeway westbound ramp): Widen and restripe of the westbound US-101 off-ramp to provide an additional right-turn only lane to accommodate the project traffic U-turn movement directly onto Canwood Street.

East approach (Canwood Street): One shared left-turn/through lane and one exclusive right-turn lane instead of an exclusive left-turn lane and a shared through/right-turn lane.

North approach (Palo Comado Canyon Road): One left-turn lane (to Canwood street), one through lane, and one right-turn only lane instead of one shared left-turn/through lane.

Either alternative should take place prior to the initial occupancy of the school.

#### Chesebro Road and US-101 Freeway Eastbound Ramps at Dorothy Drive

This intersection currently meets the County's warrant for a traffic signal installation, indicating that a traffic signal is necessary to accommodate existing traffic volumes. Therefore, the project should contribute its "fair share" to the installation of a signal and the ultimate configuration as required by the City of Agoura Hills and Caltrans. However, if a traffic signal is not acceptable to the City of Agoura Hills as traffic impact mitigation, the new lane configuration should be implemented to improve the intersection design capacity.

✓ South approach: One shared left-turn/through lane, and one shared through/right-turn lane instead of one shared left-turn/through/right-turn lane.

Eastbound on-ramp: Two entering lanes with the right lane merging with the left.

In addition, the project shall also implement the following roadway improvement to enhance travel in the vicinity:

#### Palo Comado Canyon Road Improvements

The project should improve Palo Comado Canyon Road along the west side to complete a 32-foot half roadway improvement from Canwood Street/Chesebro Road to the westbound US-101 on-ramp.

Detailed striping and signal plans must be prepared and submitted to the City of Agoura Hills and Caltrans for review and approval.

We generally agree with the study that the cumulative traffic generated by the project and other related projects in the area will also have significant impacts to City of Agoura Hills and Caltrans roadways and intersections in the area. These cumulative traffic volume increases are expected to result in significant traffic impacts at all five of the study locations. The project shall pay its pro-rata share toward the required improvements for the following intersections:

Canwood Street and Chesebro Road at Driver Avenue and Palo Comado Canyon

This intersection currently meets the County's warrant for a traffic signal installation as noted above. However, if a traffic signal is not acceptable to the City of Agoura Hills as traffic impact mitigation, the new lane configuration should be implemented to improve the intersection design capacity:

West approach: An exclusive left-turn lane, one through lane, and one shared through/right-turn lane instead of one shared left-turn/through/right-turn lane.

North approach: An exclusive left-turn lane, one shared through/right-turn lane instead of one shared through/left-turn lane and a free right-turn lane.

The project shall pay its pro-rata share towards the cost of acquiring any necessary rights of way to accomplish the proposed mitigations.

Palo Comado Canyon Road at US-101 Freeway Westbound Ramps

No additional improvements are necessary under the roundabout alternative at this location to mitigate the cumulative impact. However, if the traffic signal alternative is selected, the following additional improvements are required.

North approach: One left-turn lane, two through lane, and one right-turn lane instead of one through lane and a free right-turn lane.

South approach: One left-turn lane, one through lane, and one shared through/right-turn lane instead of one shared left-turn/through lane.

This ultimate improvement would require the existing two-lane bridge crossing the US-101 to be widened to its full width and the project shall pay its pro-rata share toward the implementation of this regional transportation improvement.

Chesebro Road and US-101 Freeway Eastbound Ramps at Dorothy Drive

No additional improvements are necessary to address cumulative impacts. The mitigation for the project-specific impacts also mitigate the cumulative impacts.

Chesebro Road at Palo Comado Canyon Road

This intersection is forecasted to meet the warrants for traffic signal installation in 2010. Therefore, the project should contribute its "fair share" to the installation of a signal and the ultimate configuration as required by the City. However, if a traffic signal is not acceptable to the City of Agoura Hills as traffic impact mitigation, the following new lane configuration should be implemented to improve the intersection design capacity.

West approach: One left-turn lane and one right-turn lane instead of one shared left and right-turn lane.

South approach: One exclusive left-turn lane and one through lane instead of one shared left-turn/through lane.

Chesebro Road and Laura La Plante Drive at Agoura Road

This intersection is forecasted to meet the warrants for traffic signal installation in 2010. Therefore, the project should contribute its "fair share" to the installation of a signal and the ultimate configuration as required by the City. However, if a traffic signal is not acceptable to the City of Agoura Hills as traffic impact mitigation, the following new lane configuration should be implemented to improve the intersection design capacity.

North approach: one left-turn lane and one shared through/right-turn lane instead of one shared left-turn/through/right-turn lane.

West approach: One left-turn only lane, one shared through/right-turn lane, and a right-turn lane instead of one shared left-turn/through/right-turn lane.

East approach: One shared left-turn/through lane and one right-turn lane instead of one shared left-turn/through/right-turn lane.

Mr. Ronald Hirsch  
April 6, 2005  
Page 6

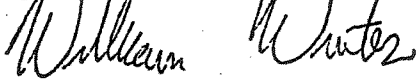
We also agree with the study that the project will not have any significant impact to the Congestion Management Program monitored locations.

In order to complete our review, a 40-foot-scale site plan showing site access locations in relationship to adjacent intersections and driveways, and driveways opposite project frontage, shall be prepared and submitted to the Land Development Review Section, Traffic and Lighting Division, for review and approval. Generally, site access should be designed to eliminate any potential conflicts between vehicles entering the site and parked vehicles on-site and/or on-site facilities, such as a trash pick-up area.

If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Marian Tadrous of our Traffic Studies Section, Traffic and Lighting Division, at (626) 300-4848.

Very truly yours,

DONALD L. WOLFE  
Acting Director of Public Works



WILLIAM J. WINTER  
Assistant Deputy Director  
Traffic and Lighting Division

CN ~~K7~~:cn

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cc: Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky (Vivian Rescalvo)  
Caltrans (Cheryl Powell)  
City of Agoura Hills (Ed Cline)  
Department of Regional Planning (Daryl Koutnik)

bc: Land Development (Chong, Cruz, Witley)



JAMES A. NOYES, Director

# COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

## DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

900 SOUTH FREMONT AVENUE  
ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91803-1331  
Telephone: (626) 458-5100  
www.ladpw.org

ADDRESS ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO:  
P.O. BOX 1460  
ALHAMBRA, CALIFORNIA 91802-1460

July 8, 2002

IN REPLY PLEASE  
REFER TO FILE: LD-4

TO: James E. Hartl  
Planning Director  
Department of Regional Planning

Attention Frank Meneses

FROM: James A. Noyes *JAN*  
Director of Public Works

### HESCHEL CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT NO. 08-062 WAIVER OF HIGHWAY DEDICATION FOR DRIVER AVENUE AND PALO COMADO CANYON ROAD

In connection with the subject proposed Conditional Use Permit, we received a letter on behalf of the applicant from Van Wert, Inc. (copy attached), requesting that Public Works waive the requirement for the dedication of proposed rights of way for Driver Avenue and Palo Comado Canyon Road. Both of these routes are still depicted on the County Highway Plan but are expected to be recommended for deletion when the County General Plan is updated.

We agree with the arguments as set forth in the June 6, 2002, Van Wert, Inc., letter leading to the conclusion that neither of these proposed highways can ever be constructed as planned. Also, it should be noted that the City of Calabasas does not recognize Driver Avenue as a highway through the Saratago Hills area and has vacated the right of way previously acquired by the County.

Pursuant to Section 22.48.290 B4 of the Planning and Zoning Code, and under my authority as Road Commissioner, the applicant is relieved of the requirement to dedicate and construct Driver Avenue and Palo Comado Canyon Road in accordance with Secondary Highway Standards and the previously approved or proposed alignments. This does not relieve the applicant of any conditions to construct required local access roads, parts of which may coincide with the subject highways.

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Barry Witler of our Land Development Division at (626) 458-4351.

BSW:jmw  
LDPUBITRANS\BARRYCUP 98-062

Attach.

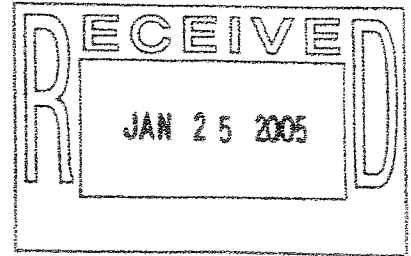


## COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

### FIRE DEPARTMENT

1320 NORTH EASTERN AVENUE  
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90063-3294

(323) 890-4330



P. MICHAEL FREEMAN  
FIRE CHIEF  
FORESTER & FIRE WARDEN

January 21, 2005

Daryl Koutnik, Senior Biologist  
Impact Analysis Section  
County of Los Angeles  
Department of Regional Planning  
320 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Mr. Koutnik:

#### **PRELIMINARY DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT AND REQUEST FOR COMMENTS PROJECT #98-062, HERSCHEL WEST SCHOOL PROJECT - AGOURA (EIR #2189/2004)**

The Preliminary Draft Environmental Impact Report for the proposed project located in the Old Agoura area of Los Angeles County, east of Palo Comado and Chesebro Roads and north of US Highway 101.

#### **PLANNING DIVISION:**

We have a few comments on Section 4.7, Fire Services. With regard to the developer fee, the Summary states, "The current fee is \$0.1930 per square foot." The current rate is \$0.3716 per square foot, with a pending rate change by the City to \$0.3877.

Under the heading "Existing Conditions," the report states "The Fire Department provides services to the Agoura Hills area from four (4) fire stations." While our previous correspondence listed the four (4) closest stations, any County Fire Department station may respond to an incident anywhere within our territory depending on need and availability. In addition, the same paragraph refers to "Jurisdictional Fire Stations 144 and 125." Only one (1) station can be jurisdictional (i.e., the first-due). In this case, it is Station 65.

Under the heading "Level of Significance After Mitigation," the report assumes an average travel speed of 35 mph. This may be optimistic in view of the frequent traffic congestion along the Ventura Freeway corridor. However, application of the NFPA guideline of four (4) minutes travel time to areas not fully urbanized is impractical. The project site is located in a suburban area characterized by pockets of urban development amidst low-density rural areas and undeveloped land. The level of service is adequate for the character of the area.

The report is correct in concluding that with the proposed mitigation, the project will not have a significant impact on fire protection service.

#### **SERVING THE UNINCORPORATED AREAS OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY AND THE CITIES OF:**

AGOURA HILLS	BRADBURY	CUDAHY	HIDDEN HILLS	LANCASTER	PALMDALE	ROLLING HILLS ESTATES	TEMPLE CITY
ARTESIA	CALABASAS	DIAMOND BAR	HUNTINGTON PARK	LA PUENTE	PALOS VERDES ESTATES	ROSEMEAD	WALNUT
AZUSA	CARSON	DUARTE	INDUSTRY	LAWDALE	PARAMOUNT	SAN DIMAS	WEST HOLLYWOOD
BALDWIN PARK	CERRITOS	EL MONTE	IRVINDALE	LOMITA	PICO RIVERA	SANTA CLARITA	WESTLAKE VILLAGE
BELL	CLAREMONT	GLENDALE	LA CANADA FLINTRIDGE	MALIBU	POMONA	SIGNAL HILL	WHITTIER
BELLFLOWER	COMMERCE	HAWAIIAN GARDENS	LAKEWOOD	MAYWOOD	RANCHO PALOS VERDES	SOUTH EL MONTE	
BELL GARDENS	COVINA	HAWTHORNE	LA MIRADA	NORWALK	ROLLING HILLS	SOUTH GATE	



**LAND DEVELOPMENT UNIT/GENERAL REQUIREMENTS:**

The following comments, regarding this project, supersede the conditions that were detailed in the letter dated August 2, 2002. (EIR #1422/2002):

The proposed development will necessitate multiple ingress/egress access for the circulation of traffic, and emergency response issues. Final access requirements will be determined in the Conditional Use Permit process. The development of this project must comply with all applicable code and ordinance requirements for construction, access, water mains, fire flows and fire hydrants.

This property is located within the area described by the Forester and Fire Warden as a Fire Zone 4, Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ). All applicable fire code and ordinance requirements for construction, access, water mains, fire hydrants, fire flows, brush clearance and fuel modification plans must be met. Specific fire and life safety requirements for the construction phase will be addressed at the building fire plan check. There may be additional fire and life safety requirements during this time.

Every building constructed shall be accessible to Fire Department apparatus by way of access roadways, with an all-weather surface of not less than the prescribed width. The roadway shall be extended to within 150 feet of all portions of the exterior walls when measured by an unobstructed route around the exterior of the building.

Access roads shall be maintained with a minimum of ten (10) feet of brush clearance on each side. Fire access roads shall have an unobstructed vertical clearance clear-to-sky with the exception of protected tree species. Protected tree species overhanging fire access roads shall be maintained to provide a vertical clearance of thirteen (13) feet, six (6) inches.

The maximum allowable grade shall not exceed 15% except where topography makes it impractical to keep within such grade; in such cases, an absolute maximum of 20% will be allowed for up to 150 feet in distance. The average maximum allowed grade including topographical difficulties shall be no more than 17%. Grade breaks shall not exceed 10% in ten (10) feet.

When involved with a subdivision in a city contracting fire protection with the County of Los Angeles Fire Department, requirements for access, fire flows and hydrants are addressed during the subdivision tentative map stage.

Fire sprinkler systems are required in some residential and most commercial occupancies. For those occupancies not requiring fire sprinkler systems, it is strongly suggested that fire sprinkler systems be installed. This will reduce potential fire and life losses. Systems are now technically and economically feasible for residential use.

**INSTITUTIONAL:**

The development requires fire flows of 3,750 gallons per minute at 20 pounds per square inch residual pressure for a three-hour duration. Fire flows are based on the size of buildings, their relationship to other structures, property lines, and types of construction used. Fire hydrant spacing shall be 300 feet and shall meet the following requirements:

1. No portion of lot frontage shall be more than 200 feet via vehicular access from a public fire hydrant.
2. No portion of a building shall exceed 400 feet via vehicular access from a properly spaced public fire hydrant.
3. Additional hydrants will be required if hydrant spacing exceeds specified distances.

Turning radii shall not be less than 32 feet. This measurement shall be determined at the centerline of the road. A Fire Department approved turning area shall be provided for all driveways exceeding 150 feet in length. All on-site driveways/roadways shall provide a minimum unobstructed width of 28 feet, clear-to-sky. The on-site driveway is to be within 150 feet of all portions of the exterior walls of the first story of any building. The centerline of the access driveway shall be located parallel to, and within 30 feet of an exterior wall on one side of the proposed structure.

1. Any access way less than 34 feet in width shall be labeled "Fire Lane" on the final recording map, and final building plans.
2. The entrance to the street/driveway and intermittent spacing distances of 150 feet shall be posted with Fire Department approved signs stating "NO PARKING – FIRE LANE" in three-inch high letters. Driveway labeling is necessary to ensure access for Fire Department use.

#### **LIMITED ACCESS DEVICES (GATES, ETC.):**

All access devices and gates shall meet the following requirements:

1. Any single-gated opening used for ingress and egress shall be a minimum of 26 feet in width, clear-to-sky.
2. Any divided gate opening (when each gate is used for a single direction of travel – i.e., ingress or egress) shall be a minimum width of 20 feet clear-to-sky.
3. Gates and/or control devices shall be positioned a minimum of 50 feet from a public right-of-way, and shall be provided with a turnaround having a minimum of 32 feet of turning radius. If an intercom system is used, the 50 feet shall be measured from the right-of-way to the intercom control device.
4. All limited access devices shall be of a type approved by the Fire Department.
5. Gate plans shall be submitted to the Fire Department prior to installation. These plans shall show all locations, widths and details of the proposed gates.

#### **TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES:**

All proposals for traffic calming measures (speed humps/bumps/cushions, traffic circles, roundabouts, etc.) shall be submitted to the Fire Department for review prior to implementation. Should any questions arise regarding design and construction, and/or water and access, please contact Inspector Marvin Dorsey at (323) 890-4243.

#### **FORESTRY DIVISION:**

The statutory responsibilities of the County of Los Angeles Fire Department, Forestry Division include erosion control, watershed management, rare and endangered species, vegetation, fuel modification for Very High Fire

Daryl Koutnik, Senior Biologist  
January 21, 2005  
Page 4

Hazard Severity Zones or Fire Zone 4, archeological and cultural resources, and the County Oak Tree Ordinance. The areas germane to the statutory responsibilities of the County of Los Angeles Fire Department have been addressed.

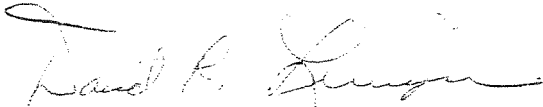
This property is located within the area described by the Forester and Fire Warden as a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone or Fire Zone 4. The development of this project must comply with all Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone code and ordinance requirements for fuel modification.

As required by Section 1117.2.1 of the County of Los Angeles Fire Code, a fuel modification plan, a landscape plan, and an irrigation plan shall be submitted with any subdivision of land or prior to any new construction, remodeling, modification or reconstruction where such activities increase the square footage of the existing structure by at least 50% within a 12-month period and where said structure or subdivision is located within an area designated as a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone or within Fire Zone 4.

A fuel modification plan, a landscape plan, and an irrigation plan shall be developed and approved prior to construction. Said plans shall be reviewed and approved by the County of Los Angeles Fire Department, Forestry Division. Specific questions regarding fuel modification requirements should be directed to the Fuel Modification Office at (626) 969-5205.

If you have any additional questions, please contact this office at (323) 890-4330.

Very truly yours,



DAVID R. LEININGER, CHIEF, FORESTRY DIVISION  
PREVENTION BUREAU

DRL:sc

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**  
**DISTRICT 7**

100 MAIN STREET, Suite 100  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012-3606  
PHONE (213) 897-3747  
FAX (213) 897-1337  
TTY (213) 897-4937



*Flex your power!  
Be energy efficient!*

May 18, 2005

IGR/CEQA cs/050410 – Revised DEIR  
County of Los Angeles  
Heschel Day School West  
US-101/ Palo Comado Canyon Rd.  
Vic. LA-101-33.7; SCH # 1998101060

Mr. Daryl Koutnik  
County of Los Angeles  
Department of Regional Planning  
320 West Temple St.  
Los Angeles, California 90012

Dear Mr. Koutnik:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation in the environmental review process for the above-mentioned project. Based on the information received, we have the following traffic/circulation comments:

1. Palo Comado Canyon Road at US-101 Freeway Westbound Ramps  
Proposed improvements to above location include:

a) Roundabout

Reconstruct the intersection including on/off ramps and local streets to install a traffic circle/roundabout. The roundabout would control all approaches to this intersection, including the northbound and southbound Palo Comado Canyon Road approaches, the westbound US-101 on/off ramps, and the Canwood Street approach. The recommended roundabout shall be designed and constructed to the satisfaction of Caltrans and the City of Agoura Hills. The roundabout is Caltrans preferred alternative due to geometric considerations.

b) Traffic Signal – Proposed Improvement

Reconfigure the intersection to include the Canwood Street approach as part of an overall intersection geometry and install a new traffic signal at this intersection. The new lane configuration for this East approach (US-101 Freeway westbound ramp): Widen and restripe of the westbound US-101 off-ramp to provide an additional right-turn only lane to accommodate the project traffic U-turn movement directly onto Canwood Street. East approach (Canwood Street): One shared left-turn/through lane and one exclusive right-turn lane instead of an exclusive left-turn lane and a shared through/right-turn lane. North approach (Palo Comado Canyon Road): One left-turn lane (to Canwood street), one through lane, and one right-turn only lane instead of one shared left-turn/through lane.

*"Caltrans improves mobility across California"*

Either of the previously mentioned alternatives should take place prior to the initial occupancy of the school.

2. Chesebro Road and US-101 Freeway Eastbound Ramps at Dorothy Drive

This intersection currently meets the County's warrant for a traffic signal installation, indicating that a traffic signal is necessary to accommodate existing traffic volumes. Therefore, the project should contribute its "fair share" to the installation of a signal and the ultimate configuration as required by the City of Agoura Hills and Caltrans. However, if a traffic signal is not acceptable to the City of Agoura Hills as traffic impact mitigation, the new lane configuration should be implemented to improve the intersection design capacity.

Proposed restriping of South approach: One shared left-turn/through lane, and one shared through/right-turn lane instead of one shared left-turn/through/right-turn lane.

Proposed modification of Eastbound on-ramp: Two entering lanes with the right lane merging with the left.

**Caltrans recommends combining the traffic signal alternative with a restriping and on-ramp widening alternative.**

3. Widening of the Chesebro Rd. Overcrossing

Based on our review, a fair-share contribution will need to be made by the project applicant to conform with the provisions of the local agency involved in the future bridge widening project.

Caltrans Encroachment Permits

Any work to be performed within the State Right-of-way including installation of a round-about and traffic signals, restriping of lanes, ramp modifications, etc. will need a Caltrans Encroachment Permit. A standard Caltrans Encroachment Permit application along with 6 set of engineering plans will be needed for Caltrans review and approval. A Construction Transportation Management Plan will be needed for any lane closures, detours, parking restrictions, etc.

Traffic Analysis Mainline Freeway/Fair Share Funding of Traffic Mitigation Measures

The applicant will need to participate in fair-share funding on a pro rata basis on the project's percentage increase in AM/PM peak hour trips on the mainline US-101 Ventura Freeway. Based on Caltrans Traffic Impact Study Guide, traffic analysis of our mainline freeway may be needed. We recommend that the project consultant contact Caltrans staff to discuss this further.

Project Related Transportation Safety Measures

All applicable transportation related safety measures will need to be implemented. We also recommend the use of multi-passenger vehicles as well as participating in a rideshare program.

r. Daryl Koutnik  
ay 18, 2005  
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#### Construction Truck Trips

We recommend that construction related truck trips on State highways be limited to off-peak commute periods. Transport of over-size or over-weight vehicles on State highways will need a Caltrans Transportation Permit.

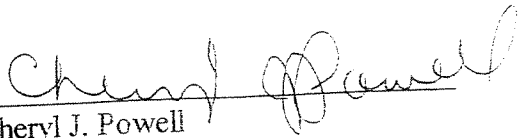
The contractor should agree to avoid excessive or poorly timed truck platooning (caravans of trucks) to minimize transportation related operational conflicts, minimize air quality impacts, and maximize safety concerns.

#### Stormwater Runoff

The proposed project will need to conform with the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) requirements relating to construction activities and Post-Construction Storm Water Management. To the maximum extent practicable, Best Management Practices will need to be implemented to address storm water runoff from new development. The responsible water quality control agencies will need to review storm water runoff facilities and drainage plans.

If you have any questions regarding our comments, please refer to our IGR/CEQA Record number cs/050410 and do not hesitate to contact me at (213) 897-3747.

Sincerely,

  
Cheryl J. Powell  
IGR/CEQA Program Manager

cc: Scott Morgan, State Clearinghouse



# United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area  
401 West Hillcrest Drive  
Thousand Oaks, California 91360-4207

In reply refer to:  
L76 (SAMO/Heschel School)

May 17, 2005

Dr. Daryl Koutnik, Impact Analysis Section  
Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning  
320 W. Temple St., Room 1348  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Dear Dr. Koutnik:

The National Park Service has reviewed the revised draft Environmental Impact Report (RDEIR) for the proposed Heschel West School Project, Project No. 98-062. The project proposes to construct a 750-student private, religious elementary and middle school on a 73-acre site. The proposed school would be located in the Old Agoura area just east of Chesebro Road and south and west of state-owned, but federally managed, parkland in lower Cheeseboro and Liberty Canyons.

The National Park Service appreciates the opportunity to participate in the public review process for Heschel West School. We provide comments on the effects of private and public land development in the Santa Monica Mountains at the invitation of state and local units of government with authority to prevent or minimize adverse uses. We respect the rights of land owners to develop their properties consistent with federal, state, and local laws. In providing comments, we assume a neutral position and do not support or oppose land development. To this end, we offer the following comments on the RDEIR.

The proposed project is located outside the federal boundary for Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area (SMMNRA). The site, however, is located within a sensitive wildlife corridor area and has potential to affect natural resource values within the SMMNRA. The corridor comprises a thin ribbon of open space near Liberty Canyon and is the last suitable connection between the Santa Monica Mountains and Simi Hills capable of supporting wildlife movement. Its protection is of highest importance to the conservation of biological diversity in the Santa Monica Mountains. Reducing the footprint of the corridor by introducing new development has the potential to affect corridor function. Open space protection of the land surrounding the Liberty Canyon wildlife corridor has been a priority among the regional park agencies as well as the local community, as reflected in the Santa Monica Mountains North Area Plan (Appendix A, Habitat Linkages). Additionally, the National Park Service's General Management Plan (GMP) places the surrounding parkland

National Park Service

Daryl Kounik, L.A. Co. Dept. of Regional Planning, Heschel West School RDEIR

Page 2

May 17, 2005

into a "low-intensity" management zone to protect resources in the corridor from impacts of visitors and facility development (Pg. 53, SMMNRA GMP, 2002). Overall, we find the RDEIR has reduced project impacts to the wildlife corridor, as well as other park natural resources. We appreciate the applicant's actions to reduce effects and your careful review to help preserve the corridor's viability.

### Biological Resources

#### *Liberty Canyon Wildlife Corridor*

A ridgeline runs roughly north-south in the eastern portion of the project site. The ridgeline provides a natural, topographic boundary at the western edge of the Liberty Canyon wildlife corridor. We appreciate the applicant's decision to relocate the large playfield downslope to the west, off the ridgeline. The relocation removes the significant direct impacts of ridgeline grading and placing a human construct in visible proximity to the wildlife corridor. Additionally, the sights and sounds of human activity at the playfield are now buffered by the intervening ridgeline.

The RDEIR states the "athletic field does not contain lights that could disturb nighttime wildlife movement in the area" (Pg. 4.5-43), although a specific illumination plan will only be defined after the project is approved (Pg. 4.5-49, Mitigation Measure 4.1-3). We recommend events at the playfield be limited to daylight and evening hours to eliminate or reduce night lighting spillage into the adjacent wildlife habitat.

The RDEIR states the applicant is willing to place a 29-acre conservation easement over the eastern edge of the property (Pg. 1.0-7). The terms of the conservation easement should dictate the land remain open space in perpetuity, as well as minimize human access to the area. The proposed conservation easement, written appropriately, would provide additional protection of the wildlife corridor.

#### *Mitigation Measures - Sensitive Plant Communities*

Figure 4.5.1, illustrating plant communities and special status plant locations, would be more useful if contour lines were added as a feature. It is difficult to assess where the proposed restoration areas in Figure 4.5-4 are in relation to the existing communities. Also, it would be helpful to have both Figures 4.5.1 and 4.5-4 in either landscape or portrait orientation.

Mitigation Measure 4.5-6 recommends replacing the direct loss of 0.5 acres of Valley needlegrass grassland at a 2:1 ratio on site or at an alternative site. Figure 4.5-4 illustrates one location for native grassland revegetation as the graded, manufactured slopes along the entrance road. In our experience with native grassland restoration, it may be difficult to successfully implement the proposed revegetation. Disadvantageous conditions in combination with performance criteria for success may result in an expensive, futile attempt to accomplish the 2:1 replacement ratio. For this area, we suggest considering a comparable areal in-lieu fee for the 2:1 replacement ratio for lost native grassland.



National Park Service

Daryl Koutrik, L.A. Co. Dept. of Regional Planning, Heschel West School RDEIR

Page 3

May 17, 2005

Mitigation Measure 4.5-6 also recommends replacing lost coastal sage scrub habitat at a 1:1 ratio. Figure 4.5-4 illustrates native grassland restoration along the entrance road and along the southerly margin of the development footprint. Figure 4.5.1 indicates the current condition along the southerly margin is disturbed coastal sage scrub. The proposed entrance road and margin may be more successfully revegetated with coastal sage scrub and a potential understory of native grass, rather than just native grassland restoration.

Figure 4.5-4 illustrates a number of valley or coast live oak trees planted along the eastern perimeter of the property in the area of the conservation easement. Oak tree plantings should follow the pattern of oak tree persistence to the north in Cheeseboro Canyon. For example, oaks typically do not thrive on south and southwest-facing slopes. The proposed illustration presents an unrealistic effort to establish oaks in locations not propitious for oak survival and out of place in the natural landscape.

Figure 4.5-4 also illustrates oaks would be planted in the northern area around the secondary access road. The proposed location formerly hosted oaks. The site would be appropriate for oak savanna restoration. We recommend planting acorns from adjacent oaks on park property to the north. The monitoring period for the growing oaks should be at least ten years, to assure the trees are well-established and protected until large enough to survive herbivory, i.e. browsing by wildlife on the young saplings.

Mitigation Measure 4.5-6 states the monitoring plan would be approved by the County and appropriate resource agencies. Given the proximity of the site to state and federal parkland, we request the National Park Service be invited to review the proposed monitoring plan.

#### *Indirect Impacts to Wildlife*

We recommend the RDEIR assess how native and non-native rodent populations will be managed and prescribe mitigation measures that avoid the use of anticoagulant rodenticides. The National Park Service's wildlife studies in the national recreation area have shown that large mammals, including bobcats, coyotes, and mountain lions, are susceptible to secondary poisoning by ingesting anticoagulant rodenticides. We recommend the DEIR assess how native and non-native rodent populations will be managed, and that the DEIR prescribe mitigation measures that avoid the use of anticoagulant rodenticides.

#### *Fuel Modification Impacts*

The RDEIR states that a Fire/Vegetation Management Plan has been prepared that is consistent with County Fire Code. The plan was not available to review with the RDEIR. The Fire/Vegetation Management Plan and the proposed vegetation restoration plan (Mitigation Measure 4.5-6) should be coordinated so that fire hazard reduction requirements are met, but will not be inconsistent with proposed restoration plans. We hope the fire management plan includes provisions to minimize, if not completely avoid, removal of coastal sage scrub on the eastern edge of the development footprint, especially in the outer,

National Park Service  
Daryl Koutnik, L.A. Co. Dept. of Regional Planning, Heschel West School RDEIR

Page 4  
May 17, 2005

"thinning area" of the 200-foot fuel modification zone. Additionally, the proposed revegetation plan should be formulated in conjunction with the fire management plan to address non-native invasive plant species proliferation that, we find, inevitably occurs with repeated fuel modification activities.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. If you have questions, please call Ray Sauvajot at (805)370-2339.

Sincerely,



Woody Smek  
Superintendent

cc: Joe Edmiston, Executive Director, Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy  
Ron Schafer, Superintendent, Angeles District, State Department of Parks and Recreation  
Dan Preece, District Manager, Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mountains